

EUGENE OREGON DAILY EMERALD
28 April 1981

Emigré implores citizens to monitor U.S. defense

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Of the Emerald

In order for Western democracies to survive, citizens — including those of the United States — must encourage newspapers to watchdog the government's national defense actions.

That's the message Lev Navrozov, Soviet emigre and author, left with his full-capacity audience Monday afternoon.

Navrozov, whose lecture was sponsored by the Intercollegiate Studies Institute and the University's Russian and East European Studies department, said the bureaucracies of the Western democracies, unlike those of the Soviet Union, aren't motivated to perform.

It's up to the citizens to compel the government to do "quality" work, he said.

"There is a general belief that Soviet bureaucracies are paid for world conquest and American bureaucracies are paid for defense," Navrozov said.

He said Soviet bureaucracies work because "the soviet bureaucracies are a natural, integral part of that society — in all autocratic societies."

The "owners," as Navrozov calls the highest Soviet officials, demand performance from the bureaucracies.

"If the bureaucracy fails to perform, off with their heads."

In the United States, there is no "owner", he said. Consequently, the bureaucracies don't perform at all.

Navrozov suggested two methods that do work in the 20th Century — free enterprise, because it is motivated by a sense of profit (not necessarily monetary profit) and totalitarian bureaucracies, because they are motivated by fear.

In a totalitarian society, "If you don't perform, you'll find yourself in Siberia," he said.

Navarov said if matters of defense, intelligence and foreign policy continue to be relegated to the bureaucracies, "that will be the end of the Western world."

For Western countries to survive, he said, the

answer is a solution proposed and advocated by Thomas Jefferson — the people of the United States.

"Who is the customer for defense in the United States? We know who is interested in Russia — the 'owners', " he said. "The answer is the people of the United States. They are the sovereign; they are the customer."

"They must monitor the defense strategy, intelligence and foreign policy through newspapers checking the government."

Nevertheless, current newspaper coverage of government defense policy is inadequate.

"The big papers — the New York Times, the Washington Post and the Chicago Sun-Times — are not interested in national defense," he said. "They want to pretend that the danger doesn't exist."

An example of the U.S. government bureaucracy's ineptness is its blind acceptance of Soviet propaganda, Navrozov said, noting the CIA's reports to Congress during the detente years.

He said CIA officials simply rewrote pamphlets printed by the Soviet Union and submitted them to Congress as hard fact.

To correct this problem, Navrozov advocates dismantling the CIA and instituting several competing corporations, including private organizations, to take over the national defense function.

However, he cautions that "only the citizens can compel the government to be quality conscious."

And with a "certain minimum level of education" the citizens can, and should, make intelligent decisions about national defense, he added.

Navrozov immigrated to the United States in 1972 shortly after the Soviet Union began allowing immigration. He is the author of a six-volume series about life in Russia. Of that series, only one volume has been published — "The Education of Lev Navrozov," which describes his childhood in Russia.